THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

BENGALURU • SATURDAY • AUGUST 19, 2023 • ₹9.00 • PAGES 24 • LATE CITY EDITION

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INDIAN INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED STUDY IN SHIMLA AT THE RISK OF 'SINKING'

The institute urged the Centre and the state government to conduct a risk assessment following a massive landslide near the campus

LANDSLIDE BEGAN AT EDGE OF INSTITUTE'S LAWN

The landslide that killed 21 in Shimla's Summer Hill area earlier this week began at the edge of the institute's outer lawn. The affected area has been covered with plastic sheets to prevent water seepage. Also, a road inside the campus, near its main building, has been sinking, sources said. "We are altering the course of the water on the road so that it doesn't flow towards the sinking side," a source said

WHOLE STATE MARKED CALAMITY-HIT AREA

- Himachal Pradesh on Friday declared the massive damage caused by heavy rains as a state calamity. Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu said proper drainage and cross-drainage system would be made mandatory for roads
- Set up in 1964, the institute is a residential centre for advanced research in areas of humanities, social sciences, and natural and life sciences

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PEOPLE HAVE DIED IN THE STATE AS A RESULT OF HEAVY RAINS

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Manipur fencers during a training session at the Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium in Chennai on Friday. Fencers from the riot-torn state are in the Tamil Nadu capital, at the invitation of the Stalin government | P RAVIKUMAR | P19

Manipur mob at it again, kills three Kuki-Zos

Attack in state's Naga-majority Ukhrul dist

PRASANTA MAZUMDAR @ Guwahati

FRESH violence broke out in Manipur after 13 days on Friday with three Kuki-Zo tribals gunned down by unidentified assailants in the state's Naga-majority Ukhrul district. The victims were all males aged between 24 and 35.

The attack happened in an area that is 2 km from Thouwai Kuki, a Kuki village. The village lies around 10 km from Meity-majority Imphal Valley and some 50 km from Ukhrul district headquarters.

The police said the incident is suspected to be a continuation of the ethnic violence that broke out in the state on May 3 after a 'Tribal Solidarity March' was organised to protest against the Meitei demand for Scheduled Tribe status.

"A kind of war is going on between two ethnic groups, so we suspect it to be the continuation of that," Ukhrul Superintendent of Police Ningsem Vashum told this newspaper.

An operation by the police and security forces to track down the assailants is underway, he said. "We don't know how many assailants were there," Vashum added.

Meanwhile, the State government sought a report from the Churachandpur district administration on the display of alleged sophisticated firearms by some people during an unofficial Independence Day parade.

Speaking on the occasion of Sadbhavana Diwas Chief Minister N Biren Singh said restoration of peace and normalcy is of paramount importance. He called on people to come together and work harder to make up for the lost three-four months. "People should work doubly hard so that the pace of development returns," the Manipur CM said.

Nagamohan Das panel to probe '40% cut'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

THE state government has constituted a committee headed by Justice HN Nagamohan Das, retired High Court judge, to conduct an inquiry into the contractors' allegation of demand for 40 per cent commission to clear the bills for project works undertaken by them during the BJP rule.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said the Congress has fulfilled its promise made in its manifesto for the May 10 Assembly elections to constitute a committee to probe the allegation against the previous BJP government, headed by then chief minister Basavaraj Bommai.

The committee has been asked to give a report within 30 days after probing the allegation made by Karnataka State Contractors' Association president D Kempanna. It has also been asked to inspect project sites to check the quality of work and examine all documents pertaining to the execution of projects.

The committee has been asked to give a comprehensive report with details of irregularities and those responsible for them, according to a Government Order (GO).

The committee has also been asked to give its suggestions and recommendations. It will probe whether administrative approvals were issued as per rules, examine the quality of work and any unusual increase in the cost of projects, and reasons for deviating from original estimates.

The government order stated that the committee will examine if bills of contractors were cleared for projects that have not been implemented and if excess payment was made.

The committee will examine if the tender process was tweaked to help some contractors and other irregularities.

Officials from various departments have been directed to provide all assistance to the committee.

They have also been directed to be present at their offices during the visits by the committee members. The committee can also take the assistance of an independent agency for testing the quality of project work.

Kempanna, who had written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking a probe into the demand for 40per cent commission, had stated that the contractors were ready to provide documents to prove their allegations.

Treat hate speech from this side or that alike: SC

SHRUTI KAKKAR @ New Delhi

HATE speech, whether be it from one side or the other, must be treated alike and dealt with under the law, the Supreme Court said during a brief hearing on Friday.

A bench of justices Sanjiv Khanna and S V N Bhati made the remark after it was informed that calls in the form of provocative slogans demanding death to Hindus were raised by members of youth wing of the Indian Union Muslim League during a rally.

"I'm clear whether it be one side or the other, they have to be treated alike and wherever there is hate speech, they will be dealt with in accordance with law," the bench said.

The judges had previously suggested constituting district-wise committees across the country to look into such instances and taking suitable action. It had sought the Centre's view on the proposal but didn't find the time to hear it. The matter will come up before the bench next Friday. The court allowed both sides to file documents and written submissions, and posted all petitions on curbing hate speech for August 25.

During the last hearing, the court had said, "We can ask the DGP to constitute a committee of three-four officers nominated by him. When he receives the material on hate speech he can refer it to the panel to check the authenticity and issue directions... The problem is, at the SHO level or at the level of the police station, the understanding of nuances of the law is little different. Senior or mid-level officers can sensitise them."

EXPRESS READ

Racist attack: Sikkim man beaten up in city

Bengaluru: In what appears to be a racially motivated attack, a 30-year-old man from Sikkim was beaten up badly by three miscreants at Electronics City on Wednesday. The victim has been identified as K Dinesh Subba, a resident of Electronics City. P3

Govt issues draft notification on BBMP ward delimitation

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

IN a late night development on Friday, the state government issued a draft notification on the delimitation of BBMP wards.

Soon after, the government sought citizens' feedback and suggestions in writing. They do not have the option of submitting their feedback through email or other social media platforms.

As per the notification, there will be 225 wards instead of 243 proposed earlier. The Palike now has 198 wards.

The government stated that it has withdrawn the notification of January 29, 2021, putting the number of wards at 243. It accepted the draft report of ward-wise delimitation submitted on August 14 by the BBMP Chief Commissioner and Administrator, based on the census of 2011. Individuals or institutions who wish to file objections or suggestions on delimitation of wards should do so on or before 15 days from the date of notification. They should be submitted in writing to the Additional Chief Secretary, Department of Urban Development Department, 436, 4th Floor, Vikasa Soudha, Dr BR Ambedkar Veedhi, Bengaluru - 560001. P2

Maiden flight of LCA naval trainer NP5 successful

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

THE Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Naval Trainer Prototype NP5 successfully completed its maiden flight on Friday.

The aircraft, which took off from HAL airport, was airborne 57 minutes with all parameters normal, according to Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

The aircraft, which incorporates the production standard airframe and rainwater compliance, maintainability improvements as well as futuristic system advancement, was captained by Capt Amit Kawade (Indian Navy) with Wg Cdr Siddarth Singh (Retd) in the rear cockpit.

Capt Kawade said the handling qualities were extremely satisfactory and all test points envisaged have been successfully completed. LCA Navy is designed and developed jointly by Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) and Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), Bangalore. The first trainer prototype NP1 was flown on April 27, 2012, and the fighter prototype NP2 on February 7, 2015. Both Naval Prototypes (NP1 and NP2) have achieved major milestones such as ski-jump take-off and arrested landing demonstrations on Shore Based Test Facility at Dabolim Airport, Goa, and operations from indigenous aircraft carriers. P5

OVER THE MOON

Craters on the Moon's surface captured by cameras on the Lander Module of Chandrayaan-3 spacecraft. On Friday, the Lander Module completed a deboosting (slowing down) operation, taking it closer to the Moon | PTI/ISRO

DISSENT RISK TO RATING: MOODY'S

MONIKA YADAV @ New Delhi

US-based rating agency Moody's Investors Service on Friday flagged the shrinking space for civil society and political dissent, and rising sectarian tensions in India, while affirming the country's credit rating at the lowest investment grade of 'Baa3' with a stable outlook.

Moody's said it believes India's economy will grow rapidly compared to international standards, although potential growth has decreased in the last 7-10 years.

"Although elevated political polarisation is unlikely to lead to a material destabilisation of government, rising domestic political tensions suggest an ongoing risk of populist policies amid the prevalence of social risks such as poverty and income inequality, as well as inequitable access to education and basic services," it added.

According to the rating agency, India's high GDP growth will lead to rising income levels and overall economic resilience, which will support fiscal consolidation and government debt stabilisation.

Moody's expects India's economic growth to outpace all G20 economies for the next two years, driven by domestic demand. However, it feels India's potential growth of 6- 6.5% remains lower than estimates.

HIGH DEBT BURDEN

The rating agency highlighted the risks associated with India's high debt burden and weak debt affordability, especially in the face of lasting upward shifts in global and domestic interest rates

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